



COVID-19 - Working from Home

Wellbeing Guide

As we manage the risk and disruption posed by COVID-19, it is essential that we limit exposure to the virus and its direct impacts on the health, safety and wellbeing. In practice, this means so many of us must work from home. It is therefore essential to create the best possible work-from-home environment and routines.

This guide has been developed to help ensure your personal health, safety and wellbeing whilst working remotely and can continue to get the most benefit and productivity from your working day.

Making the most of your workspace and equipment

Set up your home workstation as you would in the office. Taking a few minutes to ensure a comfortable physical work environment is critical to maintaining your health and safety.



Ensure you have a supportive chair. If an adjustable chair is not available, consider using cushions to support your back or roll up a small towel and place it in the small of your back to provide lumbar support.



Use a desk at a height that allows you to keep your shoulders relaxed and your head and neck upright and neutral. Find a working height that is appropriate for your neutral elbow height (not too high or not too low – *slightly lower than your elbow height*).



Consider a footrest. Where your feet are not supported on the floor when you are seated, consider using a firm box or large textbook for support.



Augment your laptop computer. Consider using a separate keyboard and mouse. Where the laptop needs to be raised, use a dedicated laptop stand, a thick book, or reams of paper to elevate.



Use a headset. Use whilst on prolonged phone calls; teleconferences; Teams Meetings; etc. This may also enable you to alternate your position.



Light your space appropriately. Avoid bright light shining directly on you or onto your monitor and use natural light during the day. You may need to consider adjusting blinds and/or curtains and/or using an extra desk lamp.



Create separation between work and home spaces. Where possible, setup your workspace that is separate and distinct from your 'home space'. Ensure this conducive to working effectively without distractions (e.g. a separate room that you can walk away from or close the door on), or if you don't have the space, consider packing up your workspace each day and get into a routine.

Allow for breaks and rest time

Without being conscious of it, we may be tempted to sit for prolonged periods when working at home. It is important to remember to:



Get up and move at least every 30 minutes – set alarms from phone devices as reminders



Take task breaks – vary your work where possible, rotate tasks throughout the day



Schedule structured breaks – enjoy morning tea and lunch away from your workstation, in fresh air and sunshine, if possible



Alternate from sitting to standing frequently – avoid prolonged periods in either position – consider taking telephone calls standing (i.e. 'walk the talk')



Take regular 'vision breaks' - Regularly look away from your computer screen (e.g. out the window), relax and adjust your eyes and vision for several seconds at a time.

Look after your body

Muscles need movement, from our tiny eye muscles to those that support our backs. Make sure you:



Schedule stretching exercises – at least 4 times a day



Get up and move around



Get some fresh air, work the lungs and stimulate the senses



Keep exercising – continue usual exercise routines where possible, if this isn't possible, consider online resources or equipment you have at home, or walk more.

Stay connected with others

Working from home does not have to mean working alone.



Stay in touch with colleagues, friends and family.



Continue to have regular meetings with your Manager and colleagues. Schedule these ensuring the whole team can participate.

Establish healthy routines

Daily habits and practices are important to ensure the most positive and productive time when working from home. Make it part of your routine to:



Go to bed and get up the same time as you usually would (and start and stop your work activities at the same times)



Do some light exercise in your usual commuting time



Take your usual break/lunch times and where possible and have the same types of foods that you would usually have at work. It can be easy to slip into less healthy eating habits which can lead to fatigue and poor health.

These resources might help

- [Guide to setting up your workstation](#)
- [Work Rave Software](#)
- [Office Workstations website](#)
- [Healthy Mind of the UNSW Wellbeing website](#)
- [EAP \(Benestar\)](#)
- [Healthy Sleep Routines](#)